

Press Release on behalf of Health Campaigning Orgs Keep Our NHS Public [1], Just Treatment [2] , Every Doctor [3], The Socialist Health Association [4] and We Own It [5] - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Corridor Care Figures Expose NHS Emergency - Health Groups respond

The publication of the first official corridor care figures must mark the beginning of urgent action, not simply another set of statistics documenting a worsening crisis in the NHS; health campaigners and staff warn.

NHS England has today published corridor care statistics for the first time, and health groups concur that they make for some very uncomfortable reading. Over 90,000 patients were forced to endure undignified and inappropriate treatment in a corridor last month, with 50,000 people stuck on a trolley waiting to be admitted to a ward for more than 12 hours - and this is a significant increase on the year before.

For too long, patients have been left waiting in unsafe and undignified conditions because hospitals do not have the beds, staffing or social care support needed to meet demand. The newly appointed Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, James Murray, must act urgently to address this crisis which has tragically long been routine at hospitals up and down the country. Murray must avoid repeating the same mistakes made by his predecessors. At the very moment the NHS should be expanding capacity to meet rising need, reports suggest services are instead being forced to plan significant cuts. This creates a serious concern that corridor care will become even more widespread, putting more patients at risk while also increasing the likelihood of moral injury and mental ill health among NHS staff.

Reports from the RCEM of over 16,000 avoidable deaths from delayed urgent care [6] is a national emergency. The government must now address the case for sustained investment in both the NHS and social care. Without increased funding and capacity across the system, patients will continue to suffer unacceptable delays and more people will die without dignity in corridors.

Dr John Puntis - Co-chair Keep Our NHS Public and retired Consultant Paediatrician, said:

"Corridor care is the result of too few hospital beds and not being able to discharge patients in a timely manner because of lack of community and social care. Dealing effectively with these problems at national level will stop tens of thousands of more unnecessary deaths. Telling people it is a local issue that can be solved by diverting patients from A&E Departments is a cruel deception on the public. Abolishing corridor care (as promised by his predecessor) should be an absolute priority for James Murray, the new health secretary."

Müge Dindjer, an NHS patient who campaigns with health justice group Just Treatment, said:

"Every week more horror stories emerge from patients experiencing dangerous and even deadly urgent care delays and backlogs. My own life was put at risk after an agonising 12 hour wait in A&E. Then over Christmas my sister had to be treated in an 'ambulance drop off site' where a fellow patient died alone in the night, out of sight of any staff. No patient should be being treated - or forced to wait for treatment - in these under-resourced and inappropriate spaces. The government say they want to end corridor care by 2029, but these words must be followed with meaningful action. That means delivering the investment in NHS beds and social care that is urgently needed in order to save lives."

Dr Andrew Meyerson, CEO of Every Doctor, said:

"It is good to see the government taking some action to tackle NHS corridor care, and we welcome this data today, because we will only grasp this crisis if the problems are accurately mapped out. But we remain deeply concerned, because this situation is an emergency for NHS patients and staff. Corridor care is not a situation to be managed, it is one to be eliminated - and ministers must move faster to secure the necessary changes."

Dr Rathi Guhadasan, Chair of Socialist Health Association, said:

"Corridor care is a permanent fixture in my local hospital, as it is up and down the country, and I have experienced long waits with my mother there. This is not merely inconvenient, the Royal College of Emergency Medicine in 2023 reported that almost 14,000 deaths were associated with long A&E stays. Last year, a staggering 554,000 patients waited 12 hours or more on trolleys - making it the worst year on record. And it is the most serious (Type 1 emergency) patients who fare the worst, often exacerbated by prolonged ambulance waits. The human cost is measurable: delayed treatment leads to avoidable harm, worsened outcomes, and even death. We urge the Health Secretary to treat this as the acute emergency it is — and to set out, with urgency and transparency, a credible plan to restore safe, timely emergency care for every patient in England."

Johnbosco Nwogbo, Outreach lead at We Own It said:

"The private sector does not have A&E and they do not train staff. Only investment in the NHS's own capacity can truly fix corridor care. These figures are an opportunity for the government to put forward an ambitious programme of investment to rebuild the NHS after 15 years of underfunding and privatisation. It will not be enough to continue shovelling public cash into private pockets. It is time the government delivered what they were elected to deliver, so that our NHS can once again work for patients, not private shareholders."

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Spokespeople are available for broadcast interview. Contact in the first instance for all spokespeople - Samantha Wathen, Press Officer for Keep Our NHS Public press@keepournhspublic.com or Call/WhatsApp: 0777 6047472

Notes to editors

1. Keep Our NHS Public is an independent organisation campaigning for a properly funded and fully publicly owned NHS: www.keepournhspublic.com
2. Just Treatment is a patient-led campaign fighting for fair and equitable treatment for patients <https://justtreatment.org/>
3. Every Doctor is a campaigning organisation fighting for patients, staff and the future of the NHS: <https://everydoctor.org.uk/>
4. The Socialist Health Association has been promoting health and wellbeing through socialist principles since 1930. They campaign for a fully free, fully resourced and fully publicly owned and provided National Health Service <https://sochealth.co.uk/>
5. We Own It campaigns against privatisation and for 21st century public ownership <https://weownit.org.uk/>
6. <https://rcem.ac.uk/news/each-a-dearly-loved-family-member-excess-deaths-linked-to-long-ae-waits-increased-to-over-16600-last-year/>